

periences, our spiritual comforts; the crucifixion goes on until we are dead and detached from all creatures, all saints, all thoughts, all hopes, all plans, all tender heart yearnings, all preferences; dead to all troubles, all sorrows, all disappointments; equally dead to all praise or blame, success or failure, comforts or annoyances; dead to all climates and nationalities; dead to all desires but for God **Himself**. There are innumerable degrees of interior crucifixion in these various lines. Perhaps not one sanctified person in ten thousand ever reaches that degree of death to self that Paul and similar saints have reached.

In contradistinction to heart cleansing, this finer crucifixion of self is gradual, it extends through months and years; the interior spirit is mortified over and over on the same points, till it reaches a state of divine indifference to it. A great host of believers have obtained heart purity, and yet for a long time have gone through all sorts of "dying daily" to self, before



they found that calm, fixed union with the Holy Ghost which is the deep longing of the child of God. Again in contradistinction to heart cleansing, which is by faith, *this deeper death to self is by suffering*. This is abundantly taught in Scripture, and confirmed by the furnace experiences of thousands.

Joseph was a sanctified man before being cast into prison; but there the iron entered into his soul (see Psalm 105:18, margin), and by suffering he reached the highest death of self. There are literally scores of Scripture passages like Psalm 71:19-21, teaching that the upper ranges in the sanctified state are wrought out through suffering. Perhaps the most remarkable

passage of the Word on this subject is in Romans, fifth chapter; the first verse teaches full justification by faith, and the second verse teaches full salvation by faith, and verses three to five teaches a deeper death and fuller Holy Ghost life by tribulation.

When the soul undergoes this deeper death of self, it enters into a great wideness of spiritual comprehension and love; a state of almost uninterrupted prayer, of boundless charity for all people; of unutterable tenderness and broadness of sympathy; of deep, quiet thoughtfulness; of extreme simplicity of life and manners; and of deep visions into God and the coming ages. In this state of utter death to self, suffering, sorrow, pain and mortification of all kinds are looked upon with a calm, sweet indifference. Such a soul looks back over its heartbreaking trials, its scalding tears, its mysterious tribulations, with gentle subduedness, without regret, for it now sees God in every step of the way. Into such a soul the Holy Spirit pours the ocean current of His own life; its great work henceforth is to watch the monitions and movements of the Spirit within it, and to yield prompt, loving, unquestioning cooperation with Him. Such a soul has at last, in deed and in truth, reached the place where there is "none of self and all of Thee."¹⁴

When Jesus is our life, we will love; feed the poor, visit the prisoner, cloth the naked, and with joy and abandon proclaim the "Good News" of God's love into all of the creation of which we are a part. Jesus says again, "Come follow me into Life, I am Life." Be loved little children, for He loves you so. In Jesus name. Amen.

Scriptural note references (NEB)

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| 1. 1 John 4:8 | 2. 2 Corinthians 5:17 |
| 3. John 1:12-13 | 4. Galatians 5:22 |
| 5. Galatians 5:1 | 6. Colossians 1:25-27 |
| 7. Romans 8:1-6 | 8. Isaiah 53:1 |
| 9. Philippians 2:6 | 10. Hebrews 5:7-10 |
| 11. John 10:17-18 | 12. Hebrews 4:15-16 |
| 13. Hebrews 13:8 | |

14. *DON'T WASTE YOUR SORROWS*, pp. 74-78 Paul E. Billheimer, © 1977 Christian Literature Crusade, Fort Washington, PA 19034

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I may speak in tongues of men or of angels, but if I am without love, I am a sounding gong or a clanging cymbal. I may have the gift of prophecy, and know every hidden truth; I may have faith strong enough to move mountains; but if I have no love, I am nothing. I may dole out all I possess, or even give my body to be burnt, but if I have no love, I am none the better. Love is patient; love is kind and envies no one. Love is never boastful, nor conceited, nor rude; never selfish, not quick to take offence. Love keeps no score of wrongs; does not gloat over other men's sins, but delights in the truth. There is nothing love cannot face; there is no limit to its faith, its hope, and its endurance. 1 Corinthians 13:1-7 (NEB)

Love. God is love.¹ We are His children. "For when anyone is united to Christ he is a new creation."² God has given to His children His own nature of love in Jesus Christ.³ The nature of God finds its expression in the fruit of the Spirit; love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, fidelity, gentleness, and self-control.⁴ And the experience of this life of Jesus as Lord within is described in 1 Corinthians 13. The freedom of life in Christ is only to be experienced in the life of love that He is, and this is why from the beginning God has insisted upon the impossible for the fallen human nature. God has sent His Son to enable us to be truly free,⁵ and there is no freedom in sin and selfishness!! So God had a "secret" plan, as St. Paul teaches. A secret now revealed through the church, the ecclesia, the "called out ones;" Christ in us, the hope of glory!⁶ A new nature, a new ability, a new vision and hope for our life, to live for God, with God, and by the power of God!⁷ Who could have believed what He was going to do?⁸

He was going to empty Himself of His glory and power and be born as a helpless infant, Jesus.⁹ In full reliance upon the Holy Spirit, He was going to grow from a child into adult responsibility. Therefore He would learn to submit to discipline, training, and suffering in order to win the right to stand for us against all the temptations of the Devil. And once perfected (mature) He became the source of eternal salvation for all who would put their trust in Him.¹⁰ In its simplest form the contest is one between pride and love; between fear and faith; between taking or giving; between self-centeredness or God-centeredness. Jesus won His battle over all that could tempt all persons, and then willingly laid down His life¹¹ to forever redeem all who would follow His example of trust in God through the ministry of the Holy Spirit.¹² Jesus remains forever the unchangeable One,¹³ and He offers to live in each of God's children as Lord of all their lives and circumstances.

Trust in God's love; faith in the complete work of Jesus; and abandonment to the ministry of the Holy Spirit moment by moment in our lives, is the pattern Jesus established for His disciples. Lay down our natural glory as He did, and become as a little child as He did, and learn the love of God as He did. If indeed we want to be *really* free in this life and for all eternity, God has a perfect, yet absolutely paradoxical, plan for each life. Die to self and live for God. All provision has been made, and it only awaits our free-will choice to believe that God wants us to be happy, and then to choose that we will submit to the "circumcision of the heart" that is necessary to be able to experience the happiness and joy that Jesus suffered so much to gain for us. And only the Holy Spirit can enable any person to even believe, let alone understand enough to make this choice.

The following is an excerpt that says in modern language what our Church has taught about the pathway to freedom and love. Remember as we read that our Father wants us happy, whole, and forever free in His love.

Learning to love with God's love.

Time - The Vestibule of Eternity

This (brokenness of self-reliance) is utterly contrary to modern psychology. It makes no sense apart from the Apostle Paul's cosmology which understands that the unseen is the real and that time is only the vestibule of eternity. According to modern psychology a robust ego is necessary for success in an egocentric world. *But in that social order which is the wave of the future, the law of love, of self-forgetfulness and selflessness, is supreme.*

To function in that social order one must be decentral-ized. This requires brokenness, which, properly accepted, secures utter deliverance from self-regard and is the basis of agape love. *Calvary love, the love that took Christ to the cross, is the supreme qualification for rulership in the new order of things to come.* That quality of love is learned only in time and in a fallen world, as one yields to be broken. *The full-time occupation of the enthroned Bride will be expressing God's love-nature throughout the universe unto the ages of the ages.*

What Is Meant By Brokenness?

One is not broken until all resentment and rebellion against God and man is removed. One who resents, takes offense, or retaliates against criticism and opposition or lack of appreciation is unbroken. All self-justification and self-defense betrays an unbroken spirit. All discontent and irritation with providential circumstances and situations reveals unbrokenness. Genuine brokenness usually requires years of crushing, heartache, and sorrow. Thus are self-will surrendered and deep degrees of yieldedness and submission developed, without which there is little agape love.

Brokenness Also Means Emptiness

Watchman Nee has said that God's great purpose in His dealing with us is to reduce us. This is because *any confidence in one's own flesh is fatal to confidence and faith in God.* Therefore, before God can release His own power to meet one's crises need, He must bring that person to the end of himself, (with utter dependence upon Jesus alone through the ministry of the Holy Spirit). ed.

Until one is broken, he is full of himself, his plans, his ambitions, his value judgements. One is often so full of self that there is little room for more of God. Where this

is true, God cannot enter into a deeper reality until there has been a divesting of selfish aims and goals, an utter self-emptying. Usually this requires disastrous failures, being "battered with the shocks of doom", complete disillusionment with one's flesh.

If thou couldst empty all thyself of self.
Like to a shell dishabited;
There might He find thee on the ocean shelf
And say, "This is not dead,"
And fill thee with Himself instead.

But thou art all replete with very thou,
And hast such shrewd activity,
That when He comes, He says, "This is enow
Unto itself; 'twere best let it be;
It is so small and full, there is no room for Me."

A Deeper Death To Self

Further illumination comes from George D. Watson's book *A Deeper Death to Self*:

There is not only a death to sin, but in a great many things there is a deeper death to self - a crucifixion to self is the unfolding and application of all the principles of self-renunciation *which the soul agreed to* in its full consecration. Job was a perfect man and dead to all sin; but in his great sufferings, he died to his own religious life; died to his domestic affections; died to his theology; all his views of God's providence; he died to a great many things which in themselves were not sin, but which hindered his largest union with God.

Peter, after being sanctified and filled with the Spirit, needed a special vision from heaven to kill him to his traditional theology and Jewish high churchism. *The very largest degrees of self-renunciation, crucifixion, and abandonment to God, take place after the work of heart purity.* There are a multitude of things which are not sinful; nevertheless our attachment to them prevents our greatest fulness of the Holy Spirit and our amplest co-operation with God. Infinite wisdom takes us in hand, and arranges to lead us through deep, interior crucifixion to our fine parts, our lofty reason, our spiritual impetuosity, our narrow culture, our creeds and churchism, our success, our religious ex-